

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17061

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MILI, TH

SUBJECT: THAILAND'S LAWS GOVERNING FIREARMS IMPORTATION

REF: STATE 177789

SUMMARY: RTG LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING FIREARMS ESTABLISH LICENSE AND/OR PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR EACH TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF ARMS WITHIN THE DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL. END SUMMARY

1. A DEALER IN FIREARMS IS REQUIRED TO REGISTER WITH THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. THE REGISTRATION REQUIRES A LENGTHY EXAMINATION AND INVESTIGATION BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND IF APPROVED, AUTHORIZES A DEALER TO TRADE IN FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION. APPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION ON REGISTRATION REQUIRES THE SIGNATURE OF THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR.

2. LICENSES, ISSUED BY THE FIREARMS REGISTRATION DIVISION, POLICE DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL THAI IMPORTS OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION. THE LICENSES ARE PERPETUAL AND ARE OFTEN REFERRED TO IN THE TRADE AS "QUOTAS." FOR EACH LICENSE ISSUED, THE FOLLOWING QUOTA IS ESTABLISHED: HANDGUNS 20 UNITS, SHOTGUNS 50 UNITS, CENTERFIRED CARTRIDGES 500 UNITS, SHOTGUN CARTRIDGES 7,500 UNITS, 22 CALIBER RIFLE CARTRIDGES 7,500 UNITS, AND AIRGUN PELLETS 25,000 UNITS. AN IMPORTER MAY APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE APPROVAL FOR AS MANY AS 20 LICENSES. HE IS LICENSED AND AUTHORIZED TO ORDER A QUANTITY OF ANY OF THE SPECIFIC ITEMS ON THE QUOTA THAT IS EQUAL TO THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SUM OF

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HIS INVENTORY PLUS PENDING ORDERS AND HIS ESTABLISHED QUOTAS FOR

THE SPECIFIC ITEMS. THE INITIAL FEE FOR EACH LICENSE IS 15,000 BAHT (APPROX. \$750) AND THE APPLICANT IS, MORE LIKELY THAN NOT, REQUIRED TO "OIL THE BUREAUCRATIC WHEELS" WITH A SIMILAR AMOUNT. SUBSEQUENTLY, AN ANNUAL FEE OF 1,500 BAHT (\$75) IS CHARGED FOR EACH LICENSE AND A 30 BAHT (\$1.50) FEE IS CHARGED FOR EACH UNIT OF IMPORTED FIREARMS.

4. BEFORE THE IMPORTER CAN RECEIVE HIS ORDER, THE IMPORTED FIRE-ARMS ARE REGISTERED (WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY) AND A THAI CONTROL NUMBER IS ENTERED BY THE POLICE DEPT. ON THE METAL PART OF THE GUN AND RECORDED IN PD'S LEDGER ALONG WITH THE MANUFACTURERS' IDENTIFICATION NUMBER.

5. RETAIL PURCHASERS OF GUNS ARE REQUIRED TO FIRST OBTAIN A PURCHASE PERMIT AND AFTER THE PURCHASE, AN OWNERSHIP LICENSE. THESE ARE EASILY OBTAINED FOR GUNS OF 32 CALIBER OR LESS. PURCHASE PERMITS AND OWNERSHIP LICENSES FOR LARGER CALIBER GUNS ARE CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN AND FREQUENTLY A PAYMENT OF "TEA MONEY" IS REQUIRED. RECORDS OF GUN DEALERS ARE INSPECTED MONTHLY BY THE POLICE TO ASCERTAIN THAT SALES WERE MADE TO AUTHORIZED PURCHASERS AND THAT THE RECORDS AND INVENTORIES ARE ACCURATE. THE SYSTEM SEEMINGLY PROVIDES FOR AN ACCOUNTABILITY OF ALL GUNS ENTERING THAILAND LEGALLY.

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